



Indiana Department of Education

SUPPORTING STUDENT SUCCESS

Room 229 State House • Indianapolis, IN 46204-2798 • 317/232-9050

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Wes Bruce

SUBJECT: Determination of School Improvement Categories

DATE: March 26, 2008

[IC 20-31-8](#) requires the State Board of Education to place public schools and accredited nonpublic schools into school improvement categories. State Board rule [511 IAC 6.2-6](#) bases the categories on a combination of: (1) the percentage of all students who pass English and math tests, averaged across subjects and grade levels; and (2) the improvement in passing percentage of a nonmobile cohort group of students (those enrolled for 70% of school year, or 126 days). Improvement is based on a three-year rolling average.

The following categories are established:

	Improvement				
Performance	Exemplary Progress	Commendable Progress	Academic Progress	Academic Watch (Priority)	Academic Probation (High Priority)
$\geq 90\%$	Exemplary School				
$\geq 80\%$	$\geq 1\%$	Commendable School			
$\geq 70\%$	$\geq 3\%$	$\geq 2\%$	$\geq 1\%$	$< 1\%$	
$\geq 60\%$	$\geq 4\%$	$\geq 3\%$	$\geq 2\%$	$< 2\%$	
$\geq 50\%$	$\geq 5\%$	$\geq 4\%$	$\geq 3\%$	$< 3\%$	$< 0\%$
$\geq 40\%$	$\geq 6\%$	$\geq 5\%$	$\geq 4\%$	$< 4\%$	$< 1\%$
$< 40\%$		$\geq 6\%$	$\geq 5\%$	$\geq 3\%$	$< 3\%$

A key principle of the category design is that a school with lower performance but strong improvement is placed in same category as school with higher performance and lower improvement.

The performance measure includes all students. “All” students means students who: (1) finished the school year in the school; and (2) have ISTEP results (at some school) for the test that follows.

The improvement measure includes the improvement in passing percentage of a nonmobile cohort group of students. “Nonmobile cohort group of students” means students who: (1) were enrolled in the school for 126 days; (2) have ISTEP results for test at the beginning of the school year; and (3) have ISTEP results for next test.

Finally, the percentage of students who “pass English and mathematics tests, averaged across subjects and grade levels” is the Step 3 result of the following:

Step 1. Determine the sum of the English tests passed plus the mathematics tests passed.

Step 2. Determine the sum of the English tests taken plus the mathematics tests taken.

Step 3. Determine the quotient of the Step 1 result divided by the Step 2 results.

A school that does not make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) for two consecutive years will be placed in a category no higher than “Academic Progress.” This incorporates AYP, as required by NCLB, and disaggregated data into our state system.

State Board rules provide that a school or school corporation may appeal its category placement based on objective factors the school considers relevant because the annual assessment data does not provide an accurate picture of school improvement and performance, including significant demographic changes in the student population, errors in data, or other significant issues. Appeals must be based on the following criteria:

ISTEP+ data for the school or corporation are correct and complete, but do not correctly portray the performance of the school or school corporation.

ISTEP+ data are correct, but incomplete, and provide an incomplete picture of the school or school corporation because students did not complete testing due to natural or manmade occurrence(s) that could not have been anticipated, demographics have changed significantly, or significant school organization changes have been made.

Appeals must contain specific student level data, and the data must be verifiable and quantitatively support the appeal. Like the NCLB accountability determinations, the determination of school improvement categories is based on the application of formulas defined and approved in the state's accountability system. Therefore, with rare exceptions, only statistical errors in the underlying data provide cause for a reconsideration of the school's status.

The attachments list the results of the application of the formulas defined in the State Board rules, as influenced by NCLB.

The spreadsheet includes the following highlights:

	Probation for three years
	in a row
	221 status capped by
	AYP

The Department of Education recommends that the Indiana State Board of Education place schools into school improvement categories as indicated.

Summary of 221 Status

	Elementary Schools		Middle Schools		High Schools	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Exemplary	379	32.4%	28	8.9%	33	8.8%
Commendable	166	14.2%	19	6.1%	35	9.3%
Academic Progress	277	23.7%	58	18.5%	59	15.7%
Watch	308	26.3%	172	55.0%	198	52.7%
Probation	40	3.4%	36	11.5%	51	13.6%

Total Schools

1170

313

376

	Overall	
	Number	Percent
Exemplary	440	23.7%
Commendable	220	11.8%
Academic Progress	394	21.2%
Watch	678	36.5%
Probation	127	6.8%

Total Schools

1859